



**GREATER
FARALLONES
ASSOCIATION**

March 19, 2026

Jenn Eckerle
Executive Director
California Ocean Protection Council
Sent via email: COPCpublic@resources.ca.gov

RE: Comments on agenda items 2, 5a, 6, and 8

Dear Jenn Eckerle,

The Greater Farallones Association (GFA) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on agenda items **2, 5a, 6, and 8** of the **March Ocean Protection Council meeting**. As the nonprofit partner to NOAA's Greater Farallones (GFNMS), Cordell Bank, and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuaries from Mendocino County to Santa Cruz County (the MLPA North-central Marine Region), GFA advances coordinated science, restoration, policy, management, and community engagement to support a healthy and resilient California coast and ocean. Through collaborative partnerships, GFA facilitates innovative and cost-effective initiatives that strengthen coastal resilience and restore critical ecosystems. We offer the following comments in support of collaboration and shared stewardship.

Item 2 - Safeguard Coastal and Marine Biodiversity

Thank you for taking an international leadership role advancing the 30x30 target and global biodiversity protection. California's role as co-lead of the High Ambition Coalition Subnational Government Task Force on 30x30—alongside Quebec—demonstrates the critical influence that U.S. states can have in driving meaningful conservation outcomes worldwide. By convening governments across geographies, political systems, and ecosystems, this Task Force creates an essential platform for collaboration, shared learning, and accountability.

We also commend OPC's leadership in shaping the first-ever Subnational Government Strategy for the International Union for Conservation of Nature. This effort represents a pivotal opportunity to institutionalize the role that U.S. states can play in achieving global biodiversity goals. California's engagement—alongside key partners such as Quebec and Catalonia—positions the state to help define an ambitious, inclusive, and action-oriented framework that can accelerate conservation at scale.

Item 2 - Legislation Update

GFA appreciates the attention to coastal resilience permitting through tracking AB 2051. Improving the efficiency and predictability of permitting processes is essential to advancing timely implementation of adaptation projects. Through regional coordination efforts such as the North-central California Coastal Sediment Coordination Committee (NCCSCC), GFA facilitated the development of a 2024 [Efficient Permitting Roadmap](#) across Sonoma, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties. We welcome opportunities to support OPC and partners in advancing this work statewide.

Item 5a - SB1 Program

GFA supports OPC's continued investment in the Senate Bill 1 Sea Level Rise Adaptation Grant Program. The program plays a critical role in advancing nature-based adaptation and supporting projects that are positioned to move from planning to implementation. GFA supports OPC's continued investment in implementation-ready projects that will be essential to advancing construction and long-term stewardship.

Agenda Item 6 - 30x30 in Coastal Waters

GFA appreciates OPC's leadership in advancing 30x30 in coastal waters and strongly supports investments that improve understanding of dynamic coastal systems. We are particularly grateful for OPC's support of GFA's *Shifting Shorelines* project, which will synthesize over 30 years of shoreline monitoring data, including beach profile and ecological datasets, to inform management of California's sandy beach ecosystems under sea level rise. By translating long-term data into decision-relevant information, this work helps address a key gap in coastal resilience and biodiversity planning. GFA looks forward to continuing to partner with OPC to ensure this work supports statewide 30x30 goals and coastal resilience efforts.

Item 8 - Science Guidance for Coastal and Ocean Restoration

GFA appreciates the report's emphasis on ambitious but achievable statewide restoration priorities, translating statewide goals into regionally actionable efforts, and advancing restoration through science-based planning, monitoring, and partnerships with tribes and local communities. We strongly align with the report's emphasis on translating statewide priorities into regionally actionable efforts, and addressing the challenges of overlapping jurisdictions. Through the NCCSCC, GFA supports GFNMS in convening 17 federal, state, and local agencies to establish shared priorities, identify science needs, and advance collective action at a regional scale. This approach directly advances the integrated, cross-jurisdictional restoration model described in the guidance.

These themes are also especially relevant to help restoration, including the guidance's focus on statewide coordination and acreage-based targets, meaningful incorporation of tribal and community priorities, stressor management paired with assisted recovery, and the importance of

monitoring and accessible data to accelerate learning across projects. Through its kelp restoration program, GFA has been leading efforts to restore up to 27 acres of bull kelp forest in the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary. GFA's experience reflects the guidance's practical framework for kelp restoration, including grazer management, seeding and outplanting, and scaling restoration in ways that are responsive to changing ocean conditions. We have seen encouraging early results, including a ten-fold increase in kelp canopy cover at one restoration site and successful growth of outplants to reproductive adults, demonstrating the value of pairing stressor reduction with assisted recovery and evaluating success through ecosystem function and adaptive monitoring. As OPC advances its Strategic Plan target to complete the Kelp Restoration and Management Plan and restore at least 2,000 acres of kelp by 2030, GFA is grateful for OPC's leadership and looks forward to continuing to contribute practitioner experience and regional partnerships in support of that vision.

We also appreciate the guidance's recognition that restoration is inherently social as well as ecological. GFA's restoration work has been strengthened by partnerships with tribes, fishers, local businesses, communities, NGOs, agencies and researchers, and we encourage OPC to continue leading on the funding, permitting efficiency, monitoring infrastructure, and cross-sector coordination needed to scale successful restoration models statewide.

California has long been a global leader in ocean and climate policy. Through OPC's work, the state is helping to shape a future where biodiversity protection is not only a shared aspiration, but a coordinated and achievable reality. Please feel free to contact me at mbrown@farallones.org with any questions or to further explore opportunities for collaboration with the Greater Farallones Association.

Sincerely,



Maria Brown
Interim Board President
Greater Farallones Association